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## Thoughts About the Class Roots of Counter - Revolution in the Territory of the Soviet Union

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I will not try to give a solid and complete answer to the question posed above given the shortness of this article and the lack of proper preparation. However, I feel obliged to at least draw the attention of revolutionary proletarians to the need to study this question deeply and scientifically for the benefit of the future class struggle of the Russian and international proletariat. Moreover, if we call ourselves Marxists we should not '*close our eyes to reality*', regardless of how bitter and tough this truth may be for us. We need to clarify the truth and its fundamental essence among the proletarians so that the workers are not deceived by the tricks of the bourgeoisie. It is necessary to explain the essence scientifically from the point of view of dialectical and historical materialism so that the working class can see itself as the maker of historical progress and so that it does not leave all the class responsibility to the vanguard or its leaders.

In the conditions of the bourgeois system the working class is the progressive class, which develops the revolutionary class struggle against the reactionary class of capitalists. The Communist Party is essentially the political vanguard, the most advanced section of the working class. In the process of class struggle political leaders arise, i.e. the cadre who are best prepared and capable for revolutionary struggle, 'the best of the best' of a small group of professional revolutionaries.

In correspondence to the Marxist - Leninist teachings, the leading force of the revolution is the most advanced class in the concrete stage of historical development, which opposes the decadent system and the class that embodies it. The role of the individual in the process of revolutionary struggle (including any political leader) is undoubtedly great, but can become determining only in particularly tense moments of the struggle, i.e. temporarily.

Therefore it would be fundamentally wrong to state that the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union depended mainly on the leadership and political activity of comrade Stalin, and that the counter - revolution in the country after the death of comrade Stalin was successful as a result of a conspiracy and the will of a bunch of Soviet revisionists who took over political power ( the so - called '*Khrushchevites*').

During the period of socialism, after the proletarian revolution and the suppression of the open class resistance of the bourgeoisie and the most obvious class enemies, for a long time there remain non - antagonistic, non - belligerent classes and social strata, as well as remnants of capitalism and certain social inequalities. As a result of this it is natural that under socialism the

class struggle continues to exist in different manifestations and forms and, given certain negative class conditions, counter - revolution may become a real threat. The main revolutionary force capable of preventing counter - revolutionary threats or suppressing counter - revolutionary activities, as before, is the working class led by its political vanguard – the communist party.

Therefore the most important task of the party is to establish a tight and relentless control over the purity of its members and to develop a continuous ideological struggle against anti - proletarian ideologies and political '*teachings*' – a tenacious dictatorship against any counter - revolutionary expression and for a general political party line aimed at the liquidation of remnants of capitalism.

The essence of the existence of the party consists in that it becomes the brains of the working class and essentially becomes a monolithic organism together with the working class. If it is isolated from the working class, the Communist party ceases to be its political vanguard and necessarily degenerates from the class point of view; the party should be able to predict the social - class issues in society, to understand them in a timely manner and to recommend to the working class the most effective methods to '*cure them*'.

The petty - bourgeois ideology and its consolidation in society is particularly dangerous for the dictatorship of the proletariat. The intelligentsia ( including officers of the army and whatever repressive organs ) and the peasantry are objectively massive conductors of the petty - bourgeois psychology. The influence of petty - bourgeois ideology on the working class is also significant, since the working class to a sufficiently large degree includes recruits from the petty - bourgeoisie and it is not separated from it by a '*Chinese Wall*'. At the time of the Great Patriotic War ( most commonly known as the Second World War, *editor's note* ) the working class suffered tremendous losses especially in terms of old party cadre who had experience in the class struggle and a stable class psychology. They were replaced by youths without sufficient class solidity.

**The proletarian ideology and the petty - bourgeois ideology express different class interests.**

Therefore it is necessary to have a very clear conception about the differences between the interests of the petty - bourgeoisie and the interests of the working class

It is the petty - bourgeois masses who reproduce bourgeois aspirations in socialist society and who engender a new bourgeoisie. To neglect the struggle against the petty - bourgeois ideology and to lose revolutionary awareness of this cowardly enemy of the proletariat may become a mortal danger for the interests of the proletarian revolution and socialism.

Under capitalism a certain fraction of the petty - bourgeoisie becomes an active ally of the proletariat, especially when the contradictions between large capital and that of the petty owner deepen. Under socialism the petty - bourgeoisie, in conformity to its class essence and its class ambiguity, may become a dangerous counter - revolutionary force when the struggle against the petty - bourgeois ideology by the communist party and the working class loses momentum. The petty - bourgeoisie then goes on the offensive when opportunities for personal profiteering exist

and when certain goods or services become scarce. The petty - bourgeois easily change their class attitude depending on the situation and due to the selfish class interests of the petty owners since they function only according to considerations of the individual or family, purely animal instincts and they cannot think about social life in perspective, in global terms. The attitude and political activity of the petty - bourgeoisie often even becomes irresponsible and rather aggressive.

The realisation of petty - bourgeois aspirations under socialism happens through the necessary preservation of certain elements of capitalism and the application of the '*bourgeois right*', which it is impossible to liquidate in a short period of time. For instance, take the distribution according to labour, which necessarily results in income differentiation and the existence of significant differences between mental and manual labour and between the city and the countryside. A concrete expression and source of petty - bourgeois aspirations are the existence of private peasant plots, private real estate and dachas, goods of excessive luxury, the special status of managerial and intellectual labour, the existence of commodity - money relations in the sphere of distribution of products, commodities and services of broad demand and so forth. These elements can only be eliminated by means of gradual liquidation of '*bourgeois right*' in the process of the progressive development of the material and technical basis of socialism. Only in this way can the conditions which reproduce the petty - bourgeois system with all its negative manifestations be liquidated.

The forms of class struggle are diverse: from the ideological struggle to armed struggle including civil war. Marxists acknowledge all forms of class struggle. In order to secure victory in the class struggle as a whole, Leninist Bolsheviks should first attain victory in the ideological struggle. At that time they became victorious. Nevertheless the ideological struggle continued. The ideological struggle between petty - bourgeois ideology, which has a multiplicity of forms, and proletarian ideology continued in different forms during the years of proletarian socialism: at times it weakened; at times it became more prominent. The thesis of comrade Stalin about the continuation of the class struggle in the process of construction of socialism is convincingly confirmed by real practice, by real life, since the only criterion of truth is practice.

**Marxism - Leninism teaches that the pre - conditions for the change of one social system to another develop within society long before the revolutionary events.** I am convinced that this fundamental thesis also applied to the case of counter - revolution in the socialist country.

Since we are dealing here with the victory of counter - revolution and the defeat of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR, therefore in the Soviet Union during the post - war period decisive changes in the correlation of class forces took place, not in favor of the proletarian forces, especially within the Bolshevik party. As a result of the class struggle these anti - proletarian forces took over. No other interpretation here is possible if we are to stick to the science of classes and class struggle.

The invasion by fascist Germany of the socialist Soviet Union should not be considered in a primitive fashion, from the point of view of a regular aggression of one country against another. In this deadly conflict two irreconcilable class forces faced each other: the most reactionary forces of capitalism siding with fascist Germany and the progressive communist forces represented by the Soviet Union, which made a breakthrough in the future of world civilisation and was dangerous for capitalism as a whole. While paying the price of countless victims and

sacrifices, the Soviet people led by the Bolshevik party defended the independence of the proletarian state, expelled the aggressor from the territory of its socialist country and crushed the fascist beast in its own lair. The working class of the Soviet Union ferociously defended its revolutionary conquests against the same reactionary forces of world capital. However, at the same time the class enemy managed to inflict a mortal wound on the Bolshevik party and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union from which later the power of the working class and proletarian socialism died in the USSR.

The Bolshevik party was the vanguard of the working class of the Soviet Union not only as a result of its specific political position. The Bolshevik party continuously directed its best party cadre to the most difficult and responsible sections of practical work, where they outstandingly demonstrated the high level of authority and respect enjoyed by party members among non-party comrades due to success in concrete practical deeds. In the years of the Great Patriotic War the Bolshevik party directed its best party cadre and the best representatives of the working class to the hardest sections of the front and the rear. The communists were the first to enter battle and the first to die. Therefore the losses among party cadre were extremely severe, especially during the first years of the war. However, the party membership grew, its ranks filled to a great degree by heroes of the front since heroism in the front was not only a mass phenomenon but an obvious one and the communists were the best of those heroes. Therefore the title of communist became a special distinction.

The fact that the overwhelming majority of new party cadre did not have party and political experience helped to dilute the class content of its ranks. As a result of this development especially during the years of the war, the party suffered a significant qualitative damage in the political sense of the word. Nevertheless, this should not be considered an error or lack of political foresight by the Bolshevik party. During the war the fate of the proletarian state was being decided at the front. Therefore the most important political goal, slogan and task at the time was: **EVERYTHING FOR VICTORY**. All the politics and life of the Bolsheviks were devoted to the latter. Therefore, by virtue of this the heroes of the front were not only heroes but were the political vanguard in the most advanced aspect of the practice of the class struggle, i.e. they essentially made up the base of the party under those conditions. This completely conformed to the politics of the party and the class demands of the war period, but it had within itself the threat of petty - bourgeois degeneration of the party ranks especially due to peasants and intellectuals.

During wartime the consciousness of the peasant masses was dominated by the psychology of the peasant - labourer. Why? The proletarian revolution and the success of socialism greatly improved the standards of living of the peasantry. The proletarian power provided the peasants with land and the necessary means, modern agricultural technique under preferential conditions through the creation of the machine - tractor stations ( MTS ), support in case of poor crops, many social - cultural benefits, it liberated the peasantry from the dangers of chaotic market relations when realising their production, etc. Under the *tsars*, the peasants could not even dream about such things. Therefore soldiers from peasant background displayed great heroism in the front lines, defending their class interests, and through this, the defence of the proletarian revolution and the proletarian state from the belligerence of the fascist invaders. Because of this the communist psychology dominated in the consciousness of the peasant - labourer during the years of the war, compelling many peasants to join the Bolshevik party, which defended the interests of the peasantry at the cost of many lives of the best children of the party.

In the post - war period the situation fundamentally changed. Having returned from the front, the peasantry faced significant material difficulties. The kolkhozes, many of which were destroyed during the war, could barely fulfill the state contracts. Industry faced the need to accommodate to the requirements of peaceful times and could not provide the peasants with the necessary industrial goods and technique rapidly enough, while at the same it justly demanded that the peasants increase the production of food and agricultural products. The private plots of peasants were not productive enough; food, clothing and many other necessary means for a modest family life were scarce. Those who fought in the front had already suffered severe scarcity, enjoyed war glory and many dreamed of a better life. This impelled the peasantry to focus on its own material interests, **and that included taking advantage of the glory earned in the war and the party membership.** These factors encouraged the peasantry to develop strong elements of private thinking in their consciousness. However, as a result of the duality of the peasants' psychology, the psychology of the petty owner and the psychology of the labourer, most of the peasant masses trusted the Bolshevik party with regard to the construction of communism since they were already convinced of the economic benefits brought by socialism. On the other hand, with regard to questions of everyday life and activity, the peasants as a rule gave priority to their private interests over the interests of society.

Such is the dialectics of the psychology of the peasant, a petty owner and a labourer at the same time. This psychology was inherited and further propagated even more aggressively by city inhabitants originally coming from the peasantry.

To defend the party ranks from the dangerous contaminations from elements with the psychology of the petty owner was already a very complicated task. Firstly, such elements already had become a large section of the party. Secondly, these elements had war achievements in serving the socialist Fatherland and this prevented other comrades from exposing them.

The intellectuals, by virtue of their social position, always serve the dominating class regardless of the social system.

Under capitalism the intellectuals, on the one hand also relate to the exploited class. On the other hand, the intellectuals, as a result of their social functions, participate in the accomplishment of the exploitation of the workers and peasants, since it is through the intellectuals that the capitalist class exerts and regulates its direct domination, i.e. the intellectuals are used as tools for the exploitation of the workers and peasants.

Under socialism the intellectuals are bound to execute the will of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Many intellectuals see themselves unwillingly forced to offer such a 'service', since they have to serve the interests of the workers and peasants whom the intellectuals had traditionally considered as lower classes. The standard of living of the intellectuals depends on their social position in society. This explains the tendency of the intellectuals to indulge in such social illnesses as careerism, bureaucratism, idealism, overestimation of their social role and the will to have a special position in society. To a great degree this explains the tendency of the intellectuals to join the Bolshevik party. As a result of their social - class specifics, the duality

of their class position, the intellectuals are easy targets for petty - bourgeois influence and decomposition.

It is common to the intellectuals and peasants, who are influenced by individualism, to make the country's leadership responsible for the organization of social life and the party.

In the post - war period the Bolshevik party was dangerously infiltrated by such petty-bourgeois elements.

It is necessary to note that:

*'if we do not close our eyes to reality we must admit that at the present time the proletarian policy of the Party is not determined by the character of its membership, but by the enormous undivided prestige enjoyed by the small group which might be called the Old Guard of the Party. A slight conflict within this group will be enough, if not to destroy this prestige, at all events to weaken the group to such a degree as to rob it of its power to determine policy'*

(V.I. Lenin Collected Works,  
4th English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966,  
volume 33, page 257).

As a result of the class struggle during the war and in the post - war period this 'small group ... of the Old Guard of the Party' also suffered great losses and became even smaller and after the death of Stalin 'slight conflicts within this group' weakened it to the extent that it did not have the '*power to determine policy*'.

The war and the severe military consequences inflicted tremendous losses on the Soviet Union not only from the class, material point of view and in terms of population, but also strengthened a number of dangerous tendencies for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The war period demanded that the economy re - direct the focus of the development of the forces of production and the efforts of all of society on the needs of the struggle against the fascist aggression. In the course of accomplishing this goal the production relations also suffered changes toward a strictly top - down structure. This shift took place not only in the organisation of the economy but in all fields of social life including politics. The need to liquidate the most severe consequences of the war also required a speedy economic restoration and the development of the forces of production under a regime of general mobilisation.

The development of production relations seriously lagged behind the development of the forces of production as a result of these extreme measures and conditions, and not only as a result of the inertia so characteristic of production relations in general.

Under the pressure and the disguise of these and other adverse conditions the functions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the development of proletarian democracy were significantly hampered. The dictatorship of the proletariat was then applied from top to bottom, mostly as a result of the activity and authority of the leading organs of the Bolshevik party, and the development of proletarian democracy in society was basically reduced to endorsing the government and party decisions produced at the top.

The strictly top - down character of the management of economic and social life seriously weakened the class control from below of the activity of the apparatus and the intellectual elite. This lack of control from below led to the social alienation and petty - bourgeois decomposition of the apparatus. As a result, the petty - bourgeois interests and actions of the managers and intellectual elites began to diverge from the class interests of the proletariat.

The situation worsened from the class - political point of view due to the replacement of managerial cadre as the result of personnel losses during the war. The replacements came mostly from demobilised army cadre and specialists of war industry who traditionally, in virtue of the organisational specifics of their previous activity, resisted the development of proletarian democracy in production and social relations, and even most probably did not understand the danger to the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism concealed in their actions.

The class and social - economic phenomena described above represented a substantial danger for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but while Stalin was alive the proletarian forces within the party managed to maintain the political situation under control in the party and in society. How can this be explained?

The most honest and deepest trust of the Soviet people towards the Bolshevik party and the proletarian power was engendered by real life and was tested to death during the years of the war. It was specifically the monolithic class unity of the Bolshevik party and the working class in alliance with the labouring masses ( non - party members ) of the Soviet Union that was one of the most determining factors that made possible the successful and rapid development of practical life of the socialist society. Therefore it is disturbing and laughable when today bourgeois ideologists claim that the Bolsheviks and their leadership allegedly usurped power and remained in power with the help of mass violence and terror. Such ignorant garbage and irreverent slanders would be denied by even the most vicious enemy of the Bolsheviks and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

**When we say Lenin we mean the party.** By analogy, the name of Stalin incorporated the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union during the so - called Stalinist period. This was related not only to Stalin's greatest contributions to the Bolshevik party and the working class. This phenomenon also has a social - class explanation. The victory of the proletarian revolution and the tremendous success of socialism during the dictatorship of the proletariat under the leadership of the Bolshevik party created a strong morale among the masses and their hopes for a bright future. The dreams of a better life turned into reality in a planned and rapid fashion. The petty - bourgeois consciousness, first of all of the peasants and the intellectuals, was used to link the good and the bad in their lives, victory or defeat, with the name of a given leader and not with the politics of the leading class; in the concrete historical case we are dealing with the dictatorship of the proletariat led by the Bolshevik party. This way it was easier for the petty - bourgeois consciousness to understand, and the successes of the country were indeed legendary. Therefore while Stalin was alive, through such manifestations, the influence of the proletarian nucleus in the party was further strengthened by the authority of the party attained during the epoch of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Marxist - Leninist line of the party did not suffer changes and the party **formally** displayed class unity among its members; **this all corresponded to the post - war period while comrade Stalin was still alive.**

After the death of comrade Stalin the petty - bourgeois forces within the party ( the Soviet revisionists, the so - called '*Khrushchevites*' ) worked hard to seize the key party positions, since to achieve control in the party structures gave them the chance to take over political power and ideological control. However, in order to change the politics of the CPSU towards the opposite class direction, i.e. to bring it in correspondence with the real power, **it was necessary to discredit the Stalinist dictatorship of the proletariat and to isolate it from the Leninist party of the Bolsheviks**, even though the Stalinist dictatorship of the proletariat solidly followed the Leninist party of the Bolsheviks.

It was because of this that the 20th Congress of the CPSU had to replace the class dictatorship of the proletariat and the vanguard role of the Bolshevik party with the '*cult of personality of Stalin*', it had to replace the class struggle with the unilateral dictate of the leader and to slander his name after his death. This completely contradicts Marxism - Leninism as a science of classes and class struggle and the whole world practice of class struggle, but it is easily comprehended by primitive petty - bourgeois consciousness.

**The 20th Congress of the CPSU should be considered as the date that formally marks the defeat of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the USSR and the execution of a counter-revolutionary coup.**

The counterrevolution did not hesitate to resort to slanders, intrigues, terror and threats to use the armed forces directly in order to attain power.

It is true that not all the party leaders agreed with the concrete actions of the class enemy. In particular Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Shepilov and other party members tried to remove Khrushchev after a while. But their actions were not reflected in the class struggle and were more like a struggle for power among the high party echelons, as if their actions had nothing to do with the class struggle and the class enemy and were a result of private organisational inner-party discussions. It is due to this that their '*struggle*' did not become an example of revolutionary class struggle. Khrushchev and his supporters declared this group '*anti - party*' and expelled them from the party leadership in their entirety.

Power in the territory of the Soviet Union fell completely into the hands of the new class forces forged in the petty - bourgeois medium who defeated the dictatorship of the proletariat in the class struggle.

**These were communists only in words, but capitalists in practice.** The new party leadership was obliged, above all, to transform the party documents according to the new essence of power and the real situation in society. Fundamental class concepts such as the '*dictatorship of the proletariat*', '*class struggle*', the '*political vanguard of the working class*' and other concepts which make up the basics of the Marxist - Leninist teachings simply disappeared. At the same time theses about the '*complete and final victory of socialism in the USSR*' were introduced, which pointed without proof to the impossibility of restoring capitalism and excluded the possibility of class struggle, about the '*party of the whole people*', etc. In other words, Marxism - Leninism was subject to open and conscientious petty - bourgeois revision. However, the external attributes of the CPSU remained untouched; the party preserved its communist name;



the state was still called socialist and the party propaganda still called for loyalty to Marxism - Leninism. This was also consistent with the psychology of the rank - and - file Soviet petty - bourgeois of that time. The revision of Marxism - Leninism also had another hidden aspect: the revisionists concealed their true ( bourgeois ) selves using Lenin.

Lenin was transformed by them into an icon for mass oration, which was harmless for the new power, and Marxism - Leninism was transformed into a petty - bourgeois pseudo - science under the excuse of '*creative development*' and ceased to inspire revolutionary action among the working class and the communists.

The representatives of the petty - bourgeois forces, who seized power and destroyed the dictatorship of the proletariat, took over all the socialised means of production; therefore de facto they became corporate owners, i.e. capitalists. From this point on we are dealing here with a bourgeois state and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Now the corporate capitalist, by virtue of the main economic law of capitalism, the law of maximum profit, should distribute the means of production accordingly. These class aspirations force changes in the economic basis at all levels with respect to ownership of the means of productions and the corresponding state policies.

A fundamental example of such transformation in the basis is the decision to liquidate the machine - tractor stations ( MTS ). The liquidation of the MTS represents the liquidation of social property of the means of production in the countryside, the return to group property of the machine stations and their inclusion in the system of commodity - money relations. That is a fundamental turning point in the essence of the economic relations between industry and the countryside towards capitalist relations.

**The dictatorship of the proletariat or the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie determines the existence of socialism or capitalism; there is no intermediate step between them.**

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